

Jefford Lewis  
Small Business  
Bipartisan

legislature  
Jan 8 2011

Listening Committee:  
Small Business

Thank you for this opportunity  
to speak to you.

I thank you to Representative  
Bethany Wilcoxson for making the  
RGA association aware of this  
opportunity.

For a little credibility to my comments  
I have grown up and lived in Montana  
all my life, worked on irrigated and  
dryland farms and ranches. After  
college graduation, I worked for  
the Agricultural Engineering Dept.  
as a research technician for 30 years

where I started mowing and haying  
the small acreages for hire on  
weekend and evenings. I still  
do this now on work as well as  
operate my own 82 acres, flood  
irrigated from the depleted which  
companies.

I have 25 beef cows and finish 2-3  
beef steers a year upon request.

Please try Jersey City in the Show room cows.  
There are several Farm Fairs around the  
state. If you have not attended a Farm  
Fair I would urge you to do so.

My friend representative Gordon Vanee  
would take you to the Belgrade Fairman  
Fair. (See attached photo)

The wisdom of the entrepreneurs that  
filed on the territory of Water before  
statehood for food production is to  
be admired.

Agriculture, small and large and all  
the associated business is an estimated  
\$2.4 billion part of the state economy.

Water is the life blood of all these  
ag operations large or small, irrigated  
or dry land.

AGA I was formed and incorporated in 2004 (as)  
a majority of the canal diversions  
on the Hollister river objected to

an application for water on two of  
the rivers tributaries.

The senior water rights either held  
by individuals or the canal companies  
are very dear and precious to production  
agriculture. Large and small alike

The prior appropriation doctrine  
should be left as is and protected.

Any changes <sup>contemplated</sup> in ~~any~~ of the water  
rights statutes should receive critical  
review so as not to effect production  
agriculture.

AGAT is recognized around the state  
Krisler Lee ~~area~~, whom we rely on to  
keep us informed on legislative action  
and to inform you of our stand and  
opinion on issues.

The adjudication process must move  
along quickly and efficiently for all water  
users, to completion.

The ground water study by USGS at the  
School of Mines should be funded.

to completion so as to have objective  
reliable hydrological data for use.

The process for application for water  
for beneficial use or change of use  
needs to be ~~more~~ efficient and better  
based on scientific facts of the  
availability of the resource.

The exempt well issue ~~may~~ may and should  
require serious' attention.

Most of the products of ag production  
that can be grown or raised in Montana  
for the food chain by ag business, family  
or the of all sizes, as well as many  
other beneficial uses require the precious  
resource water.

I will close with I hope we do not  
ruin all of our farley farm land with asphalt  
and houses, as water quality may  
deteriate we will need ~~more~~ another kind of beverage.

Thank you.